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Claims

1. A computer network implemented method, comprising:
receiving a CID;
storing said CID in memory in association with an invitation code when data associated
5 with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;
storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a
contract for a subscription to a periodical publication;
transmitting to an offer terminal data defining said CID and said invitation code in order
to provide an invitation to a consumer;
10 receiving from an acceptance terminal said invitation code in association with said CID
subsequent to said transmitting indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and
storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising determining whether consumer data associated
with said CID meets said invitation offer criteria.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for POS
data.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for block
data.
5. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for
20 preference data.
6. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for profile
data.
7. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for
demographic data.
- 25 8. The method of claim 2 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for
magazine purchases.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein said contract terms comprise a name of said periodical
publication.

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10. The method of claim 1 wherein said contract terms comprise a price for said subscription.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein said contract terms comprise an expiration date for said invitation.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein said contract terms include terms of an incentive offer.
- 5 13. The method of claim 12 wherein said terms of said incentive offer include acceptance of said invitation.
14. The method of claim 12 wherein said terms of said incentive offer include a cash discount.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein said transmitting comprises transmitting when said CID
10 is involved in a transaction at said offer terminal.
16. The method of claim 1 further comprising updating an invitation offer record in an invitation offer database to indicate code associated with said record has been used in an invitation offered to a customer.
17. The method of claim 16 wherein said invitation offer record also stores at least one of the
15 following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an offer expiration date, and an incentive offer.
18. The method of claim 16 wherein said invitation offer record also stores at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an offer expiration date, and an incentive offer.
- 20 19. The method of claim 1 further comprising generating or updating a consumer invitation record in a consumer invitation database to store a CID and a unique code.
20. The method of claim 19 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores at least one of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an invitation expiration date, incentive offer, subscription term.
- 25 21. The method of claim 19 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an invitation expiration date, incentive offer, subscription term.
22. The method of claim 19 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores data

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indicating whether said invitation has been provided to said consumer.

23. The method of claim 1 further comprises receiving payment for said subscription when receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising receiving payment for product purchases
5 concurrently with receiving said payment for said subscription.

25. The method of claim 1 further comprising generating a consumer confirmation record in a consumer confirmation database after receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein said consumer confirmation record includes a CID and a
10 transaction tracking code.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein said consumer confirmation record also includes at least one of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, a subscription term, a confirmation activation expiration date, an incentive offer, and an incentive offer expiration date.

15 28. The method of claim 26 wherein said consumer confirmation record also includes at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, a subscription term, a confirmation activation expiration date, an incentive offer, and an incentive offer expiration date.

20 29. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one criteria of said invitation offer criteria is whether a magazine is purchased.

30. The method of claim 1 wherein at least one criteria of said invitation offer criteria is whether said consumer user is in a specified top fraction of spenders.

31. The method of claim 1 wherein said invitation is provided to said consumer via direct mail.

25 32. The method of claim 1 wherein said invitation is provided to said consumer via printing at an in-store printer.

33. The method of claim 1 further comprising activating said subscription.

34. The method of claim 33 wherein said activating comprises receiving at an activation

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center a telephone call from said consumer.

35. The method of claim 33 wherein said activating comprises receiving a mailing from said consumer.

36. The method of claim 33 wherein said activating comprises receiving activation data
5 transmitted by said consumer over the Internet.

37. The method of claim 1 further comprising printing said invitation and including a printed unique bar code.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein magazine name, magazine subscription price, and offer expiration date are encrypted in said unique bar code.

10 39. The method of claim 1 wherein magazine name, magazine subscription price and offer expiration date are encrypted in said transaction tracking code.

40. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing at least two of the following items: a retail store computer system, a central computer system; an activation center computer system, a publisher computer system, a mailing facility computer system, and a coupon clearing house
15 computer system.

41. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing at least three of the following items: a retail store computer system, a central computer system; an activation center computer system, a publisher computer system, a mailing facility computer system, and a coupon clearing house computer system.

20 42. The method of claim 1 further comprising storing POS data in association with CIDS in a consumer data database.

43. The method of claim 42 wherein said consumer data database also stores in association with CIDs at least one of the following items: profile data, preference data, demographic data, and block data.

25 44. A computer network system, comprising:
a central processor and associated memory;
a terminal for receiving a CID;
a consumer data database storing data in association with CIDs;

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memory structure for storing said CID in association with an invitation code when data in said consumer data database associated with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

5 memory structure for storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a contract for a subscription to a periodical publication;

an offer terminal;

a network transmitter for transmitting to said offer terminal data defining said CID and said invitation code in order to provide an invitation to a consumer;

an acceptance terminal;

10 a network receiver for receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code in association with said CID indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and

memory structure for storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

45. The system of claim 44 further comprising code for determining whether consumer data associated with said CID meets said invitation offer criteria.

15 46. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for POS data.

47. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for block data.

20 48. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for preference data.

49. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for profile data.

50. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for demographic data.

25 51. The system of claim 45 wherein said invitation offer criteria comprises criteria for magazine purchases.

52. The system of claim 44 wherein said contract terms comprise a name of said periodical publication.

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53. The system of claim 44 wherein said contract terms comprise a price for said subscription.
54. The system of claim 44 wherein said contract terms comprise an expiration date for said invitation.
- 5 55. The system of claim 44 wherein said contract terms include terms of an incentive offer.
56. The system of claim 55 wherein said terms of said incentive offer include acceptance of said invitation.
57. The system of claim 55 wherein said terms of said incentive offer include a cash discount.
58. The system of claim 44 wherein said transmitting comprises transmitting when said CID
10 is involved in a transaction at said offer terminal.
59. The system of claim 44 further comprising code for updating an invitation offer record in an invitation offer database to indicate code associated with said record has been used in an invitation offered to a customer.
60. The system of claim 59 wherein said invitation offer record also stores at least one of the
15 following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an offer expiration date, and an incentive offer.
61. The system of claim 59 wherein said invitation offer record also stores at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an offer expiration date, and an incentive offer.
- 20 62. The system of claim 44 further comprising code for generating or updating a consumer invitation record in a consumer invitation database to store a CID and a unique code.
63. The system of claim 62 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores at least one of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an invitation expiration date, incentive offer, subscription term.
- 25 64. The system of claim 62 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, an invitation expiration date, incentive offer, subscription term.
65. The system of claim 62 wherein said consumer invitation record also stores data

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indicating whether said invitation has been provided to said consumer.

66. The system of claim 44 further comprising means for receiving payment for said subscription when receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code.

67. The system of claim 66 further comprising means for receiving payment for product
5 purchases concurrently with receiving said payment for said subscription.

68. The system of claim 44 further comprising code for generating a consumer confirmation record in a consumer confirmation database after receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code.

69. The system of claim 68 wherein said consumer confirmation record includes a CID and a
10 transaction tracking code.

70. The system of claim 69 wherein said consumer confirmation record also includes at least one of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, a subscription term, a confirmation activation expiration date, an incentive offer, and an incentive offer expiration date.

15 71. The system of claim 69 wherein said consumer confirmation record also includes at least two of the following items: a name of a periodical publication, a subscription price, a subscription term, a confirmation activation expiration date, an incentive offer, and an incentive offer expiration date.

72. The system of claim 44 wherein at least one criteria of said invitation offer criteria is
20 whether a magazine is purchased.

73. The system of claim 44 wherein at least one criteria of said invitation offer criteria is whether said consumer user is in a specified top fraction of spenders.

74. The system of claim 44 wherein said invitation is provided to said consumer via direct mail.

25 75. The system of claim 44 wherein said invitation is provided to said consumer via printing at an in-store printer.

76. The system of claim 44 further comprising means for activating said subscription.

77. The system of claim 76 wherein said means for activating comprises means for receiving

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at an activation center a telephone call from said consumer.

78. The system of claim 76 wherein said means for activating comprises means for receiving and entering data from a mailing received from said consumer.

79. The system of claim 76 wherein said mean for activating comprises means for receiving
5 activation data transmitted by said consumer over the Internet.

80. The system of claim 44 further comprising a printer for printing said invitation to include a printed unique bar code.

81. The system of claim 80 wherein magazine name, magazine subscription price, and offer expiration date are encrypted in said unique bar code.

10 82. The system of claim 44 wherein magazine name, magazine subscription price and offer expiration date are encrypted in said transaction tracking code.

83. The system of claim 44 wherein said computer network system comprises at least two of the following items: a retail store computer system, a central computer system; an activation center computer system, a publisher computer system, a mailing facility computer system, and a
15 coupon clearing house computer system.

84. The system of claim 44 wherein said computer network system comprises at least three of the following items: a retail store computer system, a central computer system; an activation center computer system, a publisher computer system, a mailing facility computer system, and a coupon clearing house computer system.

20 85. The system of claim 44 wherein said consumer data database stores in association with CIDs POS data.

86. The system of claim 85 wherein said consumer data database also stores in association with CIDs at least one of the following items: profile data, preference data, demographic data, and block data.

25 87. A computer network program product, comprising code stored on a computer readable medium for performing the following steps when loaded on networked computers:
receiving a CID;
storing said CID in memory in association with an invitation code when data associated

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with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a contract for a subscription to a periodical publication;

5 transmitting to an offer terminal data defining said CID and said invitation code in order to provide an invitation to a consumer;

receiving from an acceptance terminal said invitation code in association with said CID subsequent to said transmitting indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and

storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

88. A computer implemented method, comprising:

10 a consumer providing to a POS terminal their CID;

storing said CID in memory in association with an invitation code when data associated with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a contract for a subscription to a periodical publication;

15 said consumer receiving at a POS terminal an invitation including data defining said CID and said invitation code;

said consumer providing to a POS terminal said invitation code in association with said CID subsequent to receiving said invitation, thereby indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and

20 storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

89. A computer network implemented method, comprising:

receiving a CID associated with a consumer;

storing said CID in memory in association with an invitation code when data associated with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

25 storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a contract for at least one of a product and a service;

transmitting to an offer terminal data defining said CID and said invitation code in order to provide an invitation including an offer for said at least one of a product and a service to said

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consumer;

receiving from an acceptance terminal said invitation code in association with said CID subsequent to said transmitting indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

5 90. A computer network system, comprising:

means receiving a CID associated with a consumer;

means for storing said CID in memory in association with an invitation code when data associated with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

means for storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms

10 for a contract for at least one of a product and a service;

means for transmitting to an offer terminal data defining said CID and said invitation code in order to provide an invitation including an offer for said at least one of a product and a service to said consumer;

means for receiving from an acceptance terminal said invitation code in association with
15 said CID subsequent to said transmitting indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and

means for storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

91. A computer network system, comprising:

a central processor and associated memory;

20 a terminal for receiving a CID associated with a consumer;

a consumer data database storing data in association with CIDs;

memory structure for storing said CID in association with an invitation code when data in said consumer data database associated with said CID meets invitation offer criteria associated with said invitation code;

25 memory structure for storing in association with said invitation code contract terms comprising terms for a contract for at least one of a product and a service;

an offer terminal;

a network transmitter for transmitting to said offer terminal data defining said CID and

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said invitation code in order to provide an invitation to purchase said at least one of said product and said service to said consumer;

an acceptance terminal;

a network receiver for receiving from said acceptance terminal said invitation code in

5 association with said CID indicating acceptance of said invitation by said consumer; and

memory structure for storing said CID in association with a transaction tracking code.

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